

## **TESTIMONY SB 946**

**Joyce Okonuk, First Selectman  
Town of Lebanon**

**Finance Committee  
Public Hearing – LOB – Room 2E  
March 9, 2015**

I am writing in **OPPOSITION** to the Governor's proposal re the **Resident State Trooper Program**. Governor Malloy's proposed budget cuts \$4.6 million from the Resident State Trooper program, requiring towns to pick up 100% of the costs.

The Town of Lebanon has been a member of the RST Program for over 30 years. Being one of the largest towns in square miles of any town/city in the state, it is essential that we have the services of a Resident Trooper to oversee the small staff of part-time municipal constables that we have in our employ. Our population is under 7,500 people and our resources are limited.

In the current fiscal year at the 70% rate, the Town of Lebanon budgeted \$106,999 for the Resident Trooper wages, benefits and overtime. The State of Connecticut's total contribution this year is estimated at \$39,857. Should the percentage be increased to 100% fully funded by the town, for this year alone, the increase would have been an additional \$39,856 with a total cost to Lebanon of \$146,856, and that's not even factoring in the COLA or steps that will be in the upcoming year's proposal.

Imagine the town paying \$146,856 in wages, benefits and overtime to a state employee that we have no authority to hire, discipline or dismiss. That same state employee (not TOWN employee) works at the pleasure of the Connecticut State Police who can (without notice) reassign him to other locations anywhere in the state without town authorization or involvement. This same employee works minimal overtime (if any) for the town yet we are being asked (in this fiscal year alone) to budget \$14,000 for his overtime.

Should this proposal be enacted, it is almost a certainty that the Town of Lebanon will have to seriously reconsider our involvement in the RST Program. This level of increased funding cannot be supported through our local operating budget.

Please consider this request to **OPPOSE** and **REJECT** the Governor's proposal and SB 946.

Thank you.

Joyce R. Okonuk, First Selectman

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